

# Realization

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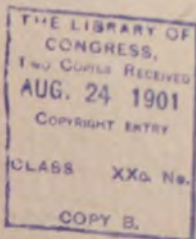
JOSEPH STEWART, LL.M.

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# Realization

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# Realization

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BY JOSEPH STEWART, LL.M.

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VOL. I

SEPTEMBER, 1901

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## Pranayama.

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### Part of An Ancient Mode of Realization.

**I**N the study of supernormal states the methods by which they are induced (when not occurring spontaneously) are of interest and value in disclosing their nature, and in determining whether they are higher manifestations or the evidences of disintegration. The method under consideration has the additional interest of great antiquity. It is a purely psychologic one, and constitutes a necessary part of the Hindu Yoga system of training, by which the aspirant seeks to effect the realization of the divine nature. We need not pay special attention here to the theories with which this practice has been associated, nor need we give to its results the special interpretation assigned by its originators. In the light of modern knowledge our conclusions may be different from theirs in these respects. We are concerned here with the fact only, which will be seen to be quite harmonious with psychic theories heretofore given in these pages.

*Pranayama* means the restraint or control of *prana*. *Prana* is usually translated *breath*, but commentators upon the *yoga-sutras* assure us that physical breath is not meant, but that vital force, a universal life-force or psychic energy, is referred to. There are so many statements in the *sutras* which are incompatible with the theory that physical breath is spoken of, and which

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are so harmonious with the theory of a subtle energy that there could be little doubt, theoretically, upon the point, even if a practical application of the method did not determine it.

While this is evident, it is nevertheless true that the physical breathing is a means by which the control is secured. Vivekananda assures us in his *Yoga Philosophy* that it is only the means, just as, to the prisoner in the tower, the slender thread is but the means by which he may draw up one of greater strength, by which in turn he secures another still stronger, until he is enabled to effect his liberation.

#### Intimate Relation Between Mind and Prana.

Doubtless the sufficient reason for this is to be found in the intimate relation between the mind and all physiological functions. "Nervous force," as the physiologist would call it, or psychic energy, is under the control of the mind as a whole. In ordinary states it is largely under the direction of the subliminal self, but is always susceptible to the influence of the normal mind exercised purposely, or manifested in extraordinary states, such as emotional ones.

This unity of the mind and *prana* is recognized and repeatedly stated in the *sutras*, as—

"Mind and *prana* have affinity for each other. If one is restrained the other is restrained also. In whatever place the *prana* is restrained, there the mind becomes fixed; where the mind is fixed, there the *prana* is restrained."

"He who suspends (restrains) the breath restrains also the working of the mind. He who has controlled the mind has controlled the breath."

#### Its Method, According to the Authorities.

The method of the *pranayama* is, therefore, a system of psychic energy-control through breathing and breath-control. For a statement of it we will examine the simpler descriptions given by the authorities. In



the commentaries of Manilal Nabhubhai Dvivedi upon the *Yoga-sutra of Pantanjali* is the following :

"*Pranayama* is of four kinds. When the breath is expired, or held out, as it is technically called, it is *rechaka*, the first *pranayama*. When it is drawn in it is the second, called *puruka*. And when it is suspended, all at once, it is the third, called *kumbhaka*. Each of these is regulated by place, time, etc. By place is meant the inside or outside of the body, and the particular length in the act. Time is the time of the duration of each of these, which is generally controlled by what is called *matra*, a measure almost answering to our second ; but any convenient measure will serve. When all of these kinds of *pranayama* are combined in one single act, the time varies as 1, 4, 2, for *puruka*, *kumbhaka*, and *rechaka*, respectively.

"Number refers to the number of times the *pranayama* is done. Works on *yoga* say that the number should slowly be carried to eighty every time one sits for practice. There are other works which say that the number must be sufficient to enable the student to mark the first *udghata* and follow it afterward. *Udghata* appears to mean the rising of the breath from the navel, and its striking at the roof of the palate. *Pranayama* has as its chief object the mixing of the *prana*, the upper breath, and *apana*, the lower breath, and raising them upward by degrees and stages, till they subside in the head. This practice awakens a peculiar force which is dormant about the navel, and is called *kundalini*. It is this force which is the source of all occult powers. The general practice is to begin with *rechaka* followed by *puruka* by the same nostril, and *kumbhaka* followed by *rechaka* at the opposite nostril, whence the course is begun over again with *puruka* and onward.

"The steady kind of *pranayama* called *kumbhaka*, is a stopping of the inspiration and respiration of the breath without reference to its internal or external position. Hence it is remarked above that it is practiced only until the first *udghata* is marked. When this state is reached, the *pranayama* that is practiced is the fourth. It considers the position of the breath in the various *padmas*, and carries it slowly, stage by stage, to the last *padma*, where complete *samadhi* ensues. Particular occult powers develop themselves at each stage of progress.

"The *padmas*, referred to above, are supposed to be plexuses formed by nerves and ganglia at different places in the body. They are generally believed to be seven, and are located at the base of the spine, below the navel, at the navel, in the throat, between the eyebrows, and in the pineal gland."

The inhalation is accompanied by the mental effort as though conducting the *prana* through the left nostril and down the left side of the spinal column. In the lowest stage the time for this is given at 12 seconds. At the end of the inhalation contract the muscles of the abdomen above and below the navel. Upon relaxing them, retain the breath for 48 seconds. Exhale through the right nostril; time, 24 seconds. Repeat by inhaling through the right and exhaling through the left nostril; and thus alternate. The time of the medium stage is 16, 64, 32; and for the highest, 20, 80, 40. (*Gheranda Sanhita, Hatha-Yoga*, pp. 39, 40.)

"By practicing the lowest for some time the body begins to perspire copiously; by practicing the middle the body begins to quiver (especially there is a feeling of quivering along the spinal cord). By the highest, there is levitation." (*Id.* 40.)

"The student should always be careful not to prolong (the retention) beyond the point where a kind of tingling sensation is felt throughout the body, and especially in the head, and even in the nails of the hand. Nor should he throw out the retained breath in a hurried or forcible manner." (*Dvivedi, Supra. Ap. v.*)

"As helps to *pranayama*, and even as independent practices leading to several important results, and even to *samadhi*, there are certain psycho-mental postures which are called *mudras*. They are ten in number. \* \* \* Of these \* \* \* *Uddiyana* consists in drawing in the navel and the parts above and below. \* \* \* *Pranayama* has *samadhi* as its aim, and this is not possible unless the power at the navel, called *kundali*, is awakened; that is to say, is made actively operative, and sent up the way of the *susumna*, which is in the middle of the body, between the (course of the two breaths). When *prana* which is forced down by *puruka*\* unites with *apana*, which is raised up \* \* \*

\* Inhalation with mental direction of psychic energy.



they unite at the navel and produce by *kumbhaka*† a peculiar kind of heat which sets the *kundali* into action." (*Id.* Ap., v.)

To this same effect the *Gheranda Sanhita* says :

"The root of the navel is the seat of *Agni-Tatra*. Raising the fire from that place, join the *Prithivi-Tatra* with it ; then contemplate on this mixed light."

According to the *yoga* philosophy there is in the body a vast system of avenues called *nadis*, for the circulation of *prana*, and which appears to be identical with the nervous system. It is supposed further that the circulation of *prana* through these avenues in their ordinary state is very imperfect on account of impurities of the body. Therefore in *Raja-yoga* a system of mental training, and in *Hatha-yoga* a number of physical expedients, as postures, etc., are enjoined as essential before the practice can be safely followed. The *pranayama* is then taken up and practiced with easy time, gradually accustoming the mind to the control. "The breath (*prana*) should be mastered slowly and by degrees, for otherwise the rash student is sure to come to grief." (*Id.*, Ap. iv.) Frequent are the warnings given against rashly practicing the methods.

The highest result of the *pranayama* in the strictly *yoga* practice is the attainment of *samadhi*, which "is defined as the merging of the mind in the soul." (*Id.*, Ap. vi.)

Besides the simple *pranayama* which has been described, there is that which is accompanied by the repetition of *mantras*. Thus while inhaling, the practitioner mentally repeats a certain *mantra*, or a word, for instance, 12 times. With the retention, the *mantra* is changed and repeated 48 times ; and changed again with the exhalation and repeated 24 times. The words used are said to have a peculiar vibrational effect upon the subtle body. Accompanying these repeated *mantras*

† The retention with the mental concentration upon the plexus.

there are held in contemplation certain concepts regarding the nature and qualities of Brahma and manifestations in substance.

### The Method Stated in Simplest Terms.

I have thus endeavored to give a brief account of the methods and the philosophy of the practice from the view-point of the authorities on the subject. It may be well to reduce these to a single coherent proposition.

Stated in its simplest form the practice would seem therefore to be this. The student assumes the adapted Oriental posture given in Passive Concentration, and inhaling, mentally conducts the *prana* as if entering the left nostril and thence down the left side of the spinal column. This may occupy 4 seconds; (the *pranayama* based on even 12 seconds—the lowest given in the sutras—is too long for those who are unaccustomed to the practice). After inhalation the muscles of the abdomen are contracted, thus drawing in the navel as far as possible. Upon relaxation of these the retention of the breath follows for 16 seconds, during which the thought (and *prana*) is held at the base of the spine. Then the breath is slowly exhaled occupying 8 seconds, during which the thought (and *prana*) is carried up the right side of column. This is repeated, beginning with the inhalation as if through the right, and terminating with exhalation through the left nostril. Alternating thus, the practice may be carried to eighty *pranayamas* (much too many for those unaccustomed to it), or until there is a sensation of a rise of psychic energy and suffusion of the being by it.

At such time, or following the special breathing, the normal breathing is resumed and the whole consciousness (which holds with it the localization of the psychic energy) may be concentrated at the solar plexus, or at some other great nervous center. When there is a spontaneous rise of this consciousness and energy to the higher centers—the region of the heart and the

brain—the consciousness of body and physical environment disappears, the whole consciousness becomes fuller and deeper, and characterized by its higher qualities and a nearer approach to universality, while the mind becomes calm and clear and of greater power and comprehension.

Accompanying each of the several steps there may be united therewith the mental repetition of some appropriate thought, or the concentration of consciousness upon it.

As a part of the *yoga* practice *pranayama* appears to be a means of inducing a psychic state in which the resident and acquired psychic energy is gathered under the mental control, suffuses the whole being, and finally rises in one united whole, in connection with or producing an ecstatic or supernormal state of consciousness.

#### Its Psychical Character and Significance.

From the purely psychic-phenomena point of view it will be apparent from what has been heretofore, and in other articles, said of psychic energy and the normal mind, that this is, mainly, a means of effecting their union and influencing the distribution and localization of the former. There is the traversing of the system of sympathetic nerves and ganglia by the course of thought, and the concentration upon some of the great plexuses. The union of the normal mind with breathing alone is, as has been elsewhere shown, a slight mental invasion of fields of psychic activity usually controlled by the subliminal mind. It is evident throughout the *sutras* that *prana* is a vital principle, though it is so intimately associated with the method of its control that it is inevitably called "breath." Doubtless this ancient system, of which this is a part, and which was so familiar twenty-six centuries ago as to have been the subject of an exact treatise by Pantanjali, has contributed its term, "breath of life," as well as fragments of its method, to the esoteric sects of other climes and later times.



Bearing in mind the conclusion suggested by the modern study of psychic phenomena, that man is a marvelous complex of conscious states and subtle energies, behind all of which there is the controlling and directing ego, we may readily find some explanation of these things. Over this harmonious ensemble of states and energy a profounder consciousness than the normal presides. Psychic science knows something of it as subliminal consciousness. The emergence of this upon the physical plane and the adjustment of the organism to environment give rise to the normal consciousness. To this normal consciousness is not assigned a very direct or powerful guidance of the deeper forces with which the subliminal consciousness is in such close rapport. But by a special effort the normal mind may enter, more or less, that field of control and exercise an influence over and direction of the manifestations. It is always the one self acting, but by a different agency.

So the psychic energy, which may be largely resident in the nervous centers and under the more immediate direction of the subliminal consciousness, may be powerfully affected, and even marshalled under the conscious control of the normal mind.

It is possible that these facts, though they may not have been understood in this particular light, will suggest reasons for the warnings found in the *sutras*. It is often stated that arousing the *prana* is liable to lead to disastrous results, unless one has first learned to control it. It is evident that if a powerful energy controlled by the subliminal consciousness be unwisely and untimely diverted from its habitual mode of manifestation, the result might not be desirable. Further, any practice of the method which interferes with healthful respiration, reducing oxygenation of the blood, or the elimination of carbon dioxide, or overstraining the lungs, must necessarily be condemned and cautioned against. No doubt serious disabilities could arise from an unwise practice.

### Conditions for and Extent of Practice that May be Desirable.

If one desires to bring under the normal mind some greater measure of control of these subtle forces for beneficent ends than is exercised under ordinary conditions, or if he chooses to effect their closer union with the normal consciousness for the realization of more unified and higher states, I see no objection, providing the method be wholly natural and followed wisely. Such wisdom should come from the deeper desires for, and the actual living of, the higher life. The impulses of the soul should be trained to expression in accordance with right and truth, and the mind should be carefully divested of its irrational, wasteful, and harmful habits. Some things along this line have heretofore been suggested. If one desires to take under the mental control the direction of other forces, he must fit his mind to control and properly use them; otherwise he will be like the foolish spendthrift who, without merit, comes into an inheritance.

The normal mind must be under control before one seeks to control anything else. Power is destructive if we do not know how to use it, or if we are foolish in its use. One should not wrest the subtle forces from the control of the subliminal consciousness and waste them through the untempered desires, the uneconomic and irrational mental habits, and the selfish wishes and passions of an undisciplined mind.

It is for this reason, as well as others, that the *yoga* practice requires an exacting and systematic training in which the mental powers are thoroughly accustomed to self-control, and the ego is alienated from the selfish purposes and desires, before this practice is carried to any great extent.

It is not for the purpose of adopting, without reserve, any psycho-mental method, or of applying it to the utmost extent advocated, that we may examine its claims; but rather that we may discover its true rationale and adapt to our modern use, if we choose, so

much of its process and to such an extent as we may believe helpful to a wise and beneficent end.

In the *pranayama* we find a method which effects a closer union of the normal mind with the subtle life-forces. If one be wise in the use of his mind, a careful and slow acquisition of this union by this method, or some adaptation of it, is desirable, and when acquired may be used for beneficent purposes.

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BENEATH the normal self there is the unfathomed depth of subliminal consciousness, which is the substratum of all our states. In all times some have by accident or device passed beyond the limits of the personal self and experienced other states. Though usually recognizing its supernormal character, they have not always interpreted the experience rightly, believing that they have been the chosen ones for a divine message to others, and not understanding that they have fortuitously experienced only the possibility of all.

The discovery that in those states there was surcease of care and distraction, and transcendency of experience, suggested their desirability over ordinary ones, and led to methods of life calculated to realize them. These were not always wise, as they generally sacrificed too much of the normal life, thus defeating the purpose of existence.

As the normal life apparently obscured these deeper states, it became, among some, to be regarded as an evil, to be minimized by asceticism and alienation from its affections, desires and interests.

As an ideal this has passed into history, and the world will not return to it; but the truth that underlies it will not be overlooked. The new knowledge of subliminal consciousness will acquaint us with our possibilities, which will be gradually realized, not by abnormal means, but by a better regulation of the normal self.



## Consciousness Independent of Body.

### Classes of Evidence.

THE essential independence of consciousness and body is a philosophical conception which, until recent years, has been tacitly rejected by science because of the alleged lack of evidence in its favor.

In its field of experimental research science has justly earned such a profound esteem that its negative, if not hostile, position upon this subject has greatly disturbed thinking minds. And yet, if we divest ourselves of the popular fallacy that if a man be wise on one subject he is necessarily so on all, and remember, too, that science devotes more money and time in the study of material elements and physical energy than in the study of man, and more time and money in a search for the north pole than in the investigation of psychic phenomena, we must conclude that it can not yet possess the knowledge to enable it to suggest final conclusions. Upon this point the late Prof. Henry Sidgwick, in his presidential address to the Society for Psychical Research, said :

"It appeared to us that there was an important body of evidence—tending *prima facie* to establish the independence of soul or spirit—which modern science had simply left on one side with ignorant contempt; and that in so leaving it she had been untrue to her professed method, and had arrived prematurely at her negative conclusions."

Every thinking person who is not under some psychological bondage which inhibits mind-freedom, wishes to know what that evidence is. Frequently the inquiry is made in the form in which it has been put to the writer: "What evidence have you that consciousness may function independently of the body?" It takes this form because experience is the most convincing evidence, and if the inquirer himself has it not,

he demands the assurance from one who has. As experience-evidence must in any event be personal it naturally divides into two classes; first, the supernormal subjective experience of the witness; second, the supernormal objective experience of the witness.

In the first class belong all supernormal and extra-organic functions and faculties, the extension of consciousness, transposition of senses, partial separation from the body, trance, ecstasy, etc.; in the second, all experience involving objective knowledge of extra-organic beings once embodied as we are.

Besides the purely subjective evidence above named, there is that of intuition, which is difficult of distinction from acquired predilection; and the philosophic, which rests upon severe intellectual canons of probability.

A rapid glance will be taken of these, not attempting to give the writer's experience, which, to be of value, would have to be accompanied by details giving it evidential character, but briefly mentioning the general fields of experience in which the occurrence of evidential facts has been admitted by competent authorities.

### Supernormal Subjective Experience.

#### Transcending Bodily Limitations.

The first class of evidence covers the larger part of what is known as psychic phenomena; and while it has revolutionized the material conceptions of mind and consciousness, and argues strongly for the hypothesis of their independence, it can not be said to be conclusive. All these experiences, though transcending the body in many instances, occur while it is still "alive," and can not therefore prove absolute independence of it. For instance, if I assert that it is possible in a deep state of concentration to so control the self and its relations with environment as to completely separate the normal consciousness from that of the physical body, and establish a conscious relationship

with a newly-perceived environment, exercising in that state all the functions of thought and reason, this though true, and strongly suggesting independence, can not prove it, for the reason that the body is still "alive;" that is, some part of the subliminal consciousness (perhaps a considerable part) still retains its complete control over the vital process, animating and preserving it in a subdued measure of functional activity, and it becomes impossible to say to what extent the conscious self, which for the time being seems so independent, is relying upon that subsisting organism. It is evidence, however, of a possible independent functioning; and if "death" should then ensue, it would mean only a further withdrawal of the portion of the self still remaining as subliminal consciousness and animating the body, and a union of the same with that part of which I am for that time supremely conscious, and which consciousness includes that of apparent separation.

So, though clearly declaring the independence of the mind of established modes of functioning, the phenomena of telepathy, clairvoyance, hyperæsthesia, paresthesia, extension of consciousness, extension of sensation, ecstasy, temporary absence from the body, are not conclusive of absolute independence, for the body is still "alive," and it is impossible to say that these states are entirely independent of it. Neither can the testimony of those who have supposedly died and afterward revived be taken, for it is evident that they have been in a trance only, or they could not have revived.

While for this one reason no subjective experiences of any "living" person can be received to conclusively prove the independence of consciousness of the body, we would be closing our minds to very competent evidence of its probability by entirely refusing to consider them.

These subjective experiences may be divided into



two general classes: First, those which, though intensely real to him who is their subject, are not of a character to afford verification to another; and second, those the fact and truth of which are susceptible of verification to another through his observation. In the first would be classed the phenomena of deep trance, ecstasy, etc., in which the body is quiescent and does not manifest the transcendent experience of the soul. In the second such manifestation is apparent to others, as in telepathy, panæsthesia, transposition of the senses, etc. Some of these are quite familiar to all; others are not. By themselves, some appear as evidences only of abnormality or supernormality; but in the light of synthetic reasoning they become very different witnesses.

#### A Central Perception.

These disclose powers and resources of the self wholly unknown in normal states, and which are not only marvelous but compel an entirely different conception of consciousness than that which is derived from materialism.

Take, for example, M. Binet's hysterical subject, in whom there was perfect tactile sensibility in the anæsthetic hand, by which she was able to handle the burning match, but in which there was no sense of pain whatever. "How," he asks, "can one explain the preservation of tactile sensibility along with the loss of sensibility to pain? Are there two orders of sensibility in connection with different centers? Are there nerves for pain, a center for pain, distinct from the nerves and center of sensation? Or does the distinction between these two sensibilities consist in a fact of central perception?" (F. W. H. Myers.)

The last inquiry approaches the true problem. It is, in fact, a matter of "central perception," and by a something independent of organism; for here we have the absence of pain, but the presence of all the physiological causes which are supposed, from the point of

materialism, to give rise to it. If one is but the material effect of the other there could be no such severance.

Note just the opposite state, where there is evidence of this cognition, this "central perception," transcending the physiologically-determined results. As, when by anæsthesia of the arm in hysteria there is no conscious feeling, yet there is a central perception of any muscular or tactile impression or excitement, not as *feeling*, but as a *visual impression*. In the same way the subject perceives *visually* any figure written on the skin. Thus, while according to materialism the tactile nerves can give rise to but one order of sensation, *feeling*, we find a "central perception" which is wholly independent of such limitation.

In hyperæsthesia, the intensified sensibility, the phenomena suggests the possibility of independence of consciousness. Sensibility heightened fifty-fold, as estimated in a case where an unknown coin pressed upon the skin was read in all its details, is difficult to explain on the materialistic hypothesis.

#### Transposition of Senses.

But when we consider panæsthesia, we find that the "central perception" becomes wholly independent of the normal avenues assigned to the respective senses. Thus, Dr. Fontan's subject while in somnambulist trance, and made psychically deaf and with ears stopped, "heard" through the agency of the fingers; under similarly appropriate conditions, he would "smell" and "see" by the same means.

This "seeing," by reason of the transposition of sense, as well as by clairvoyance, is very instructive in this connection, for it is not only independent of the physiological requisite (the retina), but dispenses with a physical necessity to normal sight, namely, the lens, which is necessary to refract the rays and focus them to produce a distinct image. We thus see that the

"central perception," for its image-interpretation of things, is not only independent of recognized physiological modes, but of *physical adaptation*.

Hardly less remarkable are the cases of extension of sensation in which the subject feels acts done to substances charged with his personal aura, but which have been removed to a distance.

### Function Not Necessarily Dependent Upon Organ.

All these phenomena show that the ego is essentially independent of the time-established organs of function. Consciousness is the supreme fact of existence, and when we find that there is no necessary *nexus* or connection between its special functions and the respective organs physiologically correlated with them, it must be regarded as strong evidence of its independence.

Does it not prove that the organism is but the time-honored expedient, the specially evolved mode of expression, which may be transcended even while the ego is still embodied in it? Philosophically we know that "seeing" is a purely psychical act, though materialism insists that it is a mere function of the organ of sight; but these psychic phenomena show us that we may "see" without the aid of the organ. Why should we believe that the organism as a whole is essential to consciousness when we find that the specially evolved parts, which have always served for the special functionings, and which we have heretofore believed were necessary for such, are in fact non-essential, and only convenient, conventional, expedient and psycho-selected?

It may be urged that although it is shown that the special organs are not absolutely indispensable to the special forms of perception, yet some organism is necessary to hold the content of consciousness out of which the special forms of such are differentiated



This admits the separate existence of consciousness and the mere instrumentality of the body.

If it were a fact that faculty or function were necessarily co-ordinated with physiological structure it would give strong support to the theory of dependence of consciousness upon the body. How much stronger for the theory of independence is the fact that there is no necessary but only an expedient correlation, as we have seen.

### Faculty Unaccounted for by Physical Evolution.

There is another point in this connection which I would suggest. Materialistic science holds that faculty (being included in life) is evolved through the processes of natural selection, the adaptation of the organism to environment. It is evident that this furnishes no basis—but rather negatives one—for the independence or survival of consciousness or faculty.

If such hypothesis were true we could never find any faculty whose evolution and existence did not have a physical basis in the evolution of the organism. There would always be a complete equivalency between the causes (special organs) and the effects (faculties). On the contrary, psychical research has disclosed the existence of this very class of faculties—faculties which are not such as natural selection and the theories of *physical* evolution can account for or evolve. In other words, the processes of physical evolution have differentiated *some* expressions of that original "somewhat" upon which it has worked, but it never originated it, nor has it evolved those other expressions which may be evoked. The importance of this can not be overestimated when we remember that the materialistic hypothesis depends in its very nature upon the existence of a physical equivalent cause for every psychical fact.

If, therefore, we have faculty and knowledge for which we are not indebted to evolution and the phys-

ical organism either for their origin or evolution, does not the fact declare the existence of consciousness independent of the body while *still in it*? If independent of the body now, why not continue so when the body disintegrates? Is the one more improbable than the other? I think not.

Escape from this conclusion may be attempted by contending that though it is shown that these super-normal faculties are independent of organism, they are nevertheless dependent upon an ego which is itself dependent upon the organism. This is a demonstrable impossibility. The whole, some part of which is independent, could not be dependent.

The facts of telepathy, of subliminal consciousness, and emerging personalities (which will be examined fully at another time), disclose states and faculties which do not appear to be necessarily related to the growth and development of the body. There is a residuum in these that evolution can not account for; there are differentiations of it which have no apparent relation to bodily changes. There is a hiatus here between organism and consciousness, and it occurs where the former ceases to be a necessary instrument and the latter stands forth in momentary independence, foreshadowing its power of survival.

Other classes of evidence will be considered hereafter.

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THERE are no mysteries except to the uninitiated; there are no uninitiated except those of non-perception, non-wisdom. There is no divine design to hide anything. All things are natural and necessary parts of a whole. If they appear otherwise, it is only because of our lack of knowledge and perception. When we acquire these, all things apparently mysterious and hidden become for us natural and disclosed.

## The Fire-Ordeal.

### II.

#### Col. Gudgeon's Narrative.

IN the preceding number there was given a brief account of the antiquity and wide diffusion of the fire-ordeal. "Nobody," says Andrew Lang, "would guess that a rite of passing deliberately, and unscathed, through ovens or furnaces yet exists in Japan, Bulgaria, the Society Islands, Fiji, Southern India, Trinidad, the Straits Settlements, the Isle of Mauritius, and, no doubt, in other regions." A few examples of such, now known as the modern Fire-Walk, will be given, drawn from Mr. Lang's paper, or from the sources of information cited.

The first example occurred in Rarotonga, and is related by a British officer in *The Journal of the Polynesian Society*, March, 1899, and Mr. Tregear, the well-known lexicographer of the Maori and allied Mangarova languages, vouches to Mr. Lang for the upright, truthful character of the officer, Colonel Gudgeon, who is the narrator of his own experience. The salient points are as follows:

"I must tell you that I have seen and gone through the fire ceremony of the *Umu-Ti*. The oven was lit about dawn, and I noticed that the stones were very large, as also were the logs that had been used in the oven for heating purposes.

"About 2 p. m. we went to the oven and found the *Tohunga* (a Raiatea man) getting matters ready, and I told him that, as my feet were naturally tender, the stones should be leveled down a bit. Men with very long poles that had hooks, began to level the stones flat in the oven, which was some twelve feet in diameter.

"He then unwound two bundles which proved to be the branches of a large-leaved *Ti*, plucked, it is said,



from two of these trees standing close together, and it is said that the initiated can on such occasions see the shadow of a woman with long hair, called *te varuakino* (evil spirit), standing between the trees. So much for the Shamanism, and now for the facts.

"The *tohunga* (priest) and his pupils walked to the oven and, halting, the prophet spoke a few words, and then each struck the edge of the oven with the *ti* branches. This was three times repeated, and then they walked slowly and deliberately over the two fathoms of hot stones. When this was done, the *tohunga* came to us, and his disciple handed his *ti* branch to Mr. Goodwin, at whose place the ceremony came off. Then the *tohunga* said to Mr. Goodwin, "I hand my *mana* (power) over to you; lead your friends across." Now, there were four Europeans, Dr. W. Craig, Dr. George Craig, Mr. Goodwin, and myself, and we stepped out boldly. I got across unscathed, and only one of the party was badly burned; and he, it is said, was spoken to, but like Lot's wife, looked behind him, a thing against all rules.

"I can hardly give you my sensations, but I can say this: that I knew quite well I was walking on red hot stones and could feel the heat, yet I was not burned. I felt something resembling slight electric shocks, both at the time and afterwards, but that is all. I do not know that I should recommend every one to try it. A man must have *mana* to do it; if he has not, it will be too late when he is on the hot stone of *Tama-ahi-roa*.

"To show you the heat of the stones, quite half-an-hour afterwards some one remarked to the priest that the stones would not be hot enough to cook the *ti*. His only answer was to throw his green branch on the oven, and in a quarter of a minute it was blazing.

"I walked with bare feet, and after we had done so, about 200 Maoris followed. No one, so far as I saw, went through with boots on. I did not walk quickly across the oven, but with deliberation. My feet also were very tender. I did not mention the fact, but my impression as I crossed the oven was that the skin would all peel off my feet. Yet all I really felt when the task was accomplished was a tingling sensation not unlike slight electric shocks on the soles of my feet, and this continued for seven hours or more. The really funny thing is that, though the stones were hot enough an hour afterward to burn up green branches

of the *ti*, the very tender skin of my feet was not even hardened by the fire.

"Many of the Maoris thought they were burned, but they were not, at any rate not severely.

"Do not suppose that the man who directed this business was an old *tohunga*. He is a young man, but of the Raiatea family, who are hereditary fire-walkers."

#### Dr. Hocken's Narrative.

Dr. T. M. Hocken, F. L. S., gave a detailed account of the Fiji "fire-ceremony," which he witnessed at Mbenga, which was published in the *Transactions of the New Zealand Institute*, Vol. XXXI., 1898, and which may be found in full in Mr. Lang's valuable paper. (*Proc. Soc. for Psychological Research*, Pt. XXXVI.) The following extracts state the material facts:

"It was necessary to give the natives three days in which to make their preparations—constructing the oven and paving it with stones, which then required heating for thirty-six or forty-eight hours at least, with fierce fires fed with logs and branches. They had also to gather their stores of food to form the foundation of the huge feast, whose preparation was to succeed the mystic ceremony."

After reciting the arrival of his party at the scene of the ceremony and describing the festival scene presented by the hundreds of Fijians, decked in garlands of bright flowers and ribbonwood streamers, he continues:

"The great oven lay before us, pouring forth its torrents of heat from huge embers, which were still burning fiercely on the underlying stones. The pitiless noon-tide sun, and the no less pitiless oven heat, both pent up in the well-like forest clearing, reduced us to a state of solution from which there was no escape. Despite this, the photographers took up their stations, and others of us proceeded to make our observations. The *lovo*, or oven, was circular, with a diameter of 25 or 30 feet; its greatest depth was perhaps 8 feet; its general shape was of a saucer, with sloping sides and a flattish bottom, the latter being filled with the white-

hot stones. Near the margin of the oven, and on its windward side, the thermometer marked 114 degrees."

Here he describes the sudden appearance of a throng of savages, who, amid the shouting of a wild rythmical song, cleared the oven of its burning logs.

"This accomplished, the stones at the bottom of the oven were disclosed, with here and there flame flickering and forking up through the interstices. The diameter of the area occupied by those stones was about 10 feet, but this was speedily increased to a spread of 15 feet or more by a second ingenious method. \* \* \* Our thermometer was suspended by a simple device over the center of the stones, and about 5 or 6 feet above them; but it had to be withdrawn almost immediately, as the solder began to melt and drop, and the instrument to be destroyed. It, however, registered 282 degrees Fahrenheit, and it is certain had not this accident occurred the range of 400 degrees would have been exceeded and the thermometer burst.

"During all these wild scenes we had seen nothing of the main actors—of the descendants of Na Galita. Doubtless to give more impressive effect, they had been hiding in the forest depths until the signal should be given and their own supreme moment arrive. And now they came on, seven or eight in number, amidst the vociferous yells of those around. The margin reached, they steadily descended the oven slope in single file, and walked, as I think, leisurely, but as others of our party think, quickly, across and around the stones, leaving the oven at the point of entrance. The leader, who was longest in the oven, was a second or two under half a minute therein. \* \* \*

"Just before the great event of the day I gained permission to examine one or two of the fire-walkers prior to their descent into the oven. \* \* \* The two men thus sent forward for examination disclosed no peculiar feature whatever. As to dress, they were slightly garlanded around the neck and the waist; the pulse was unaffected, and the skin, legs, and feet were free from any apparent application. I assured myself of this by touch, smell, and taste, not hesitating to apply my tongue as a corroborative. The foot-soles were comparatively soft and flexible—by no means leathery and insensible. This careful examination was repeated immediately after egress from the oven, and with the same result."



The narrator states that no incantations or other religious ceremony was used, though it was formerly customary to do so; that various natives, interrogated for an explanation replied, "They do this wonderful thing; we can not."

"Whilst thus unable to suggest any explanation or theory, I am absolutely certain as to the truth of the facts and the *bona fides* of the actors. A feature is that, wherever this power is found, it is possessed by but a limited few. I was assured, too, that any person holding the hand of the fire-walkers could himself pass through the oven unharmed. This the natives positively assert."

#### Other Narratives.

In the *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, Vol. II., No. 2, is the account of Miss Tenira Henry. Her sister and sister's child, in Tonga, walked over the red-hot stones, the performance being photographed by Lient. Morné, of the French Navy, and the original photograph sent to the editor of the *Journal*. Miss Henry is of Polynesian origin. Her account may be found also in Mr. Lang's "*Passing Through The Fire*," in *Contemporary Review*, Vol. 70, and is valuable on account of the invocation given.

Mr. Basil Thomson, who was an official in Fiji, and is a well-known anthropologist, describes the ceremony at length as he witnessed it. This may be found in his *South Sea Yarns*, in *Blackwood's* for 1894, and in Mr. Lang's article in *Contemporary Review*, above noted. "When we were at last summoned the fire had been burning for more than four hours. The pit was filled with a white-hot mass shooting out little tongues of white flame, and throwing out a heat beside which the scorching sun was a pleasant relief." The wood was removed, the stones leveled by the aid of long poles, and the fire-walkers went through. As the last was emerging the natives threw in the *ti* leaves and branches, as was customary, for their cooking, from

which a dense cloud of vapor arose as the walkers returned to the pit and pressed them down with their feet. Mr. Thomson examined the feet of several natives as they emerged. "They were cool, and showed no trace of scorching, nor were their anklets of dried tree-fern burnt," though "dried tree-fern is as combustible as tinder, and there were flames shooting out among the stones. The instep is covered with skin no thicker than our own, and we saw the men plant their insteps fairly on the stone." A handkerchief dropped on a stone (which had previously been hooked out) at the time they first entered and allowed to remain until the last left the pit, was charred where it touched the stone, and otherwise turned yellow.

Colonel Andrew Haggard witnessed the ceremony in Tokio in 1899 (*The Field*, 1899, p. 724). In this case it appears there was an accompanying religious ceremony, and people of all ages walked through "red-hot charcoal." "I examined their feet afterwards, they were quite soft, and not a trace of fire upon them."

Mr. Lang cites a number of other cases of similar characteristics which have occurred in other localities, including those mentioned in *Annales des Sciences Psychiques*, July, 1899. In one of these latter cases performers who entered the fire after the procession (a Brahmin ceremony) had gone were slightly burned.

These are sufficient to indicate the general characteristics of the modern cases of fire-walking, which are still to be witnessed throughout the whole extent of Polynesia, and the facts of which are established upon the evidence of entirely trustworthy persons, who, in many instances, are persons of scientific training. For extended accounts the reader is referred to the citations, especially Mr. Lang's articles.

The cases of fire-handling, and an examination of the theories of explanation will be given in the next.

## Subliminal Rapport.

**W**HEN we perceive that a very large part of the normal expression of life is fundamentally a response to the many forms of stimuli that reach the consciousness through the sense and mind-channels, it should not surprise us that the same law of expression governs that realm of consciousness which lies deeper than the senses, and that there is a rapport between souls that is independent of those clumsy devices. The senses are means which we have evolved in order to bring ourselves into rapport with a few states of matter. They are the mere index of the larger, broader, and more subtle rapport that exists between the souls that have evolved them.

This rapport is a characteristic of the subjective states, in which the normal consciousness is more or less withdrawn from the domination of the sense-impressions and the thoughts of active life. Thus, it is perceived in those instances where the normal consciousness recedes from the outer life, or where the subliminal consciousness emerges and dominates for the time being the normal state.

These states are reached with varying success through the practices of the Silence and Concentration, as heretofore described. Here one finds himself—perhaps dimly at first, but with increasing distinctness—perceiving a new environment and in a new manner. The limitations of the sense-world gradually dissolve and he begins to feel a close rapport with a wide sphere of thought and influence and life. He becomes normally conscious upon the subliminal plane, where a closer bond of inter-relation binds all souls in one life principle.

Here this law of rapport interacts with another of equal effect, namely, that of response. Faint and imperfect is the response in the normal state, compared



with that in the subliminal. Here the means of inhibition, which are so powerful in the normal state in the form of active conventional thought and predilection, are largely absent, and there is nothing to interfere with a quick and perfect response. Consequently the potential powers of the individual are awakened along the lines of the dominant aspirations into quick and powerful expression. If one enters the Silence with a high and dominating desire to realize the purer and loftier within himself, the fountains of Being are opened in that direction and the state which he attains is characterized by those qualities. He thus psychically selects that aspect of his subliminal self, and all that is harmonious with it in his potential nature, in his stored-up memories, and in his aspirations, respond in this expression to that selection.

The potential power thus realized interacts through rapport upon other souls. On the subliminal side of life there is this ever-existent relation, and with those who enter the sphere normally there is the perception of some of its evidences. When one thus invokes the higher powers and brings them into activity, it awakens a like response in souls with whom there is this rapport. As these are thus awakened they react by reciprocation upon their originator. This is a law of relation which moulds our normal state to a great extent, but finds a vastly more perfect expression in the subjective ones.

This condition of rapport and reciprocal response is the basis of telepathy, of some forms of psychic healing, and many subjective phenomena. It is pronounced between those who are accustomed to enter the Silence, especially if associated in the same effort and actuated by the same lofty purpose.

Mr. John Duncan Quackenbos has written very instructively of one phase of it, in his "*Reciprocal Influence in Hypnotism*," published in *Harper's Magazine* for June, 1901. He has given much attention to the higher uses of hypnotism, and writes of the effects

upon himself resulting from the reciprocal relations established with his patients. These, he explains, greatly vary according to the condition and aspiration of the patient: "some mysteriously exalt, many are seemingly negative; all who in sincerity and faith seek moral or intellectual aid through hypnotic channels, in some way, immediately or remotely, stimulate the mind that offers it. There is a more marked return in ethico-spiritual than in intellectual inspiration."

He notes the great draft upon nervous energy made by those suffering from moral perversion or remorse, and that some appear to gain relief by casting upon the physician the whole burden of their mental and psychical distress.

He speaks of the lofty elevation of consciousness which he felt when treating suggestionally a lady who came to be inspired with the realization of "oneness with the Infinite God of Love." It is evident from the recital that the subject was actuated by an intense desire and a lofty aspiration to attain that state; consequently when in the subjective condition her own subliminal response became active, bringing about that realization in a degree, and communicating it to him.

There is another aspect of the subject which is usually overlooked by those who bestow, and those who seek in others, this inspiration through subliminal rapport. It is, that the inspiration, the possibility of the lofty uplift of consciousness which is sought by rapport with another, is inherent in himself and may and should be self-awakened and realized. For those who are seeking the ways of permanent higher unfoldment this is of greater importance than the other.

It may be that by reason of some special mental trait, some cultivated habit of thought which inhibits subliminal expression, or an abiding lack of confidence in the possibility of realization which always acts as an inhibition, some persons find a more ready response in themselves to the inspirational suggestion of another

than to their own. If, however, one learns to enter the Silence and does so with the single and lofty purpose and desire of realizing his diviner self, these obstacles will be gradually overcome. He will discover that there is a sphere of rapport higher than that merely between souls. He will find that according to the nature of the elements which he brings into the ether he will experience a corresponding measure of elevation and inspiration; and if he follows this path he will further learn that elevation only, and not depression, will be the character of his experience; and this is true because he psychically selects and brings into reciprocal activity only the higher powers which inspire. There is not only rapport between souls upon many ascending planes, but there must be rapport with the undifferentiated consciousness and its attributes as well. It is with this that the higher practices of the Silence as to a considerable extent concerned.


This does not depreciate or eliminate soul-union, for there always exists a common bond in the subliminal sphere; and one who aspires to and realizes any of these higher states is not thereby creating a barrier between himself and others, but is making it possible for them to more quickly attain those states through powers awakened by his inspiration.

Thus, one who consciously evokes these higher conditions becomes the creator of a higher realization in himself, and independent of the impulse conveyed by the mind of another. He is thus following the law of true mastery, which does not neglect to utilize harmoniously all natural relations as aid, but subordinates them to an independent creative faculty. At the same time he becomes an inspirer of higher states in others by reason of the law of subliminal rapport; and this results not necessarily by any special volition, but by reason of cosmic relations and oneness of spirit.



## Etchings.

## You Cannot Fail.

 F that far end  
To which life and change and progress  
Shape your destiny,  
You cannot fail.  
There is no place  
Where Nature errs ;  
There are no laws  
That of expression fail ;  
No elements mistake affinities ;  
You cannot fail.

No sun that with its myriad host  
Illumines space is there in vain ;  
No atom under foot  
But that fulfills  
Its perfect part.  
Suns burn out and Systems end,  
But not for naught.  
A lofty joy of Being thrills  
Ere they depart,  
And changes come  
To light some more supernal day.  
You cannot fail.

Time spreads its wrecks  
Across the world ;  
Man builds to-day  
But ere his thought  
Has reached completion  
Oblivion's approaching night  
Soon claims his work ;  
Yet not in vain.  
Each thought and act  
Was of realisation full.

And ideals vanish only  
At the dawn of higher ones.  
You cannot fail.

Ages unfold their plan  
That you may rise.  
In ceaseless toil and labor  
Man has wrought,  
And time and change  
Have swept their works away ;  
But in the heart and mind  
Results remain  
That lift the soul  
To higher planes.  
You cannot fail.

No change nor circumstance  
Defeats the end  
To which you live.  
The past and future culminate  
In your eternal Now.  
What you may be,  
What shall attain,  
Naught e'er can change ;  
For in perfection of the whole  
Is every part involved.  
You cannot fail.

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### Ad Interim.

Between the hope and realization there is an interim. The soul that seeks some cherished ideal unfolds into it through a series of life-expressions. Individually, this series is the Way of the Mystic ; it is the "Living the Life" to which you have dedicated your spiritual endeavors ; it is the aspiration, the searching for Light, and the experiences of daily life. As a whole, it is the long ascending effort of the world.

In this interim-experience human life in its aggregate expression unfolds as One. Impelled by a tireless energy, striving with unflagging persistence, hoping with sublime confidence, it moves resistlessly toward its temporary object. Each age and time furnishes its own ideal, which, while the aspiring souls are yet approaching it, fades mirage-like into that of the next. To each the whole effort is devoted until the truths it has to teach are learned and make higher perception possible. But always the Reality draws nearer.

To the natural and insistent demand that life shall be sustained, man turns, perchance, his whole endeavor; and in this interim ultimate ends are forgotten, except in so far as this becomes a necessary step to higher states. The intoxicating draught of pleasure is tasted, and with the singleness of effort that makes his life a power he devotes himself to exhausting an imaginary world of bliss—and in the interim loses all else. The blare of trumpet and the tread of martial feet are heard, the wild-fire of patriotic thought sweeps from mind to mind, and straightway the spirit of strife and rivalry and selfishness, which the march of time has left behind and progress decrees shall fade from consciousness, flames up, and all as one man exhaust themselves in its expression—and in this interim all else is lost.

And thus the world as a whole toils on, devoting its resistless energies successively to those ideals that most profoundly appeal to it for expression. In all of it there is realization full and complete within the limits of the ideal held; but they are only approaching the state desired.

But the wise need not thus exhaust their energies. What the world has learned is theirs by inheritance, and they need not continually repeat the experiences on which it is based. With them the interim between progressive stages may be diminished until they blend in One Realization.



## BOOK REVIEWS.

**THE POWER OF THOUGHT IN THE PRODUCTION AND CURE OF DISEASE.** By WM. H. HOLCOMBE, M. D. Paper, 21 pp., 15c. Purdy Publishing Co., Chicago, Ill.

This is an able, clear, and forceful essay on the power of thought and the influence of the mind over the body for health and disease.

**THE RIGHT OF THE CHILD TO BE WELL BORN.** By Rev. MABEL MACCOY IRWIN. Paper, 10c. National Purity Association, Chicago, Ill.

This is a forceful and convincing essay regarding a truth which has a profound bearing not only upon the child, but the spiritual unfoldment of the parents.

**BIBLIOT. No. 1. THE BOOK OF RUTH.** An Idyl of Friendship between The Heaven and The Earth. By Rev. GEO. CHAINEY. 104 pp., paper, 25c., cloth, 60c., leather, \$1.00. The School of Interpretation, Masonic Temple, Chicago, Ill.

The author presents an esoteric interpretation of the story of Ruth. He finds it a representation of the psychologic union of the human and divine, and the full realization of the Higher Consciousness in man. It is beautifully printed and illustrated.

**A VISIT TO A GNANI.** By EDWARD CARPENTER. Cloth, 134 pp. Authorized New Ed., \$1.00. Stockham Publishing Co., Chicago, Ill.

This well-known writer gives in plain and concise language the truths which he heard from one of those great teachers and exemplars of esotericism in India. It is told so directly, clearly, and entertainingly, and with such correct insight, that the reader will get from it easily what a search in more abstruse volumes might not disclose. Students interested in Higher Consciousness will find it helpful.

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